

IOWA BOARD OF NURSING

In RE: Petition for)	Declaratory Order No. 103
Declaratory Order Filed By:)	
Sherrie Williams-Leach, R.N.)	RN Applying Topical Skin
Donna L. Goettsch, R.N.)	Adhesive to Close Simple
Jan Sutton, R.N.)	Skin Lacerations
Becky Neighbors, R.N.)	
November 12, 1999)	

A petition for a declaratory order was filed with the Iowa Board of Nursing by Sherrie Williams-Leach, RN, and Donna L. Goettsch, RN, Jan Sutton, RN and Becky Neighbors, RN, employees of John Deere Davenport Works, Davenport, Iowa, on November 12, 1999.

The Board of Nursing is authorized to issue declaratory orders "as to the applicability of any statutory provision, rule, or other written statement of law or policy, decision, or order of the agency" pursuant to Iowa Code § 17A.9. See also 655 IAC 9.

The Board's interpretation of the question is:

Is it within the scope of practice of the registered nurse employed in an occupational health clinic to use a topical skin adhesive to close simple skin lacerations under the written protocol of the medical director/plant physician?

Facts leading to this request are as follows:

The John Deere Occupational Health Services Clinic is located within the John Deere Davenport Works factory in Davenport, Iowa. The clinic is staffed by registered nurses working under the direction of a plant physician. The clinic has

nursing coverage 21.5 hours per day and physician coverage 12 hours per week. The physician is on call 24 hours per day.

Registered nurses provide multiple services for employees of the factory including emergency care of work related to injuries. Lacerations are among the most frequent presenting injury and simple lacerations make up the majority of these wounds. When the registered nurse receives a client with a laceration, the wound is evaluated for severity. Clients may be referred to the local emergency department for further evaluation and treatment or clients with easily approximated, simple skin lacerations may receive on-site treatment with a topical skin adhesive following written protocol.

Additional facts are as follows:

Dermabond is a sterile liquid topical skin adhesive used to hold closed easily approximated skin edges from incisions including trauma-induced lacerations. It cannot be used on mucosal surfaces, skin regularly exposed to body fluids, in areas with dense hair, below the skin surface, around the eyes, or in high skin tension areas. It may not be used if there is evidence of infection or for pressure ulcers. The product may not be used if the patient has a known hypersensitivity to cyranacrylate or formaldehyde.

The product is used in place of stitches or staples in skin-deep cuts and is for topical use only, not for deep wounds under the skin. The wound is cleansed and dried, the edges are approximated using sterile technique, and the adhesive is applied in accordance with the manufacturer's directions. The adhesive

is activated by the skin's warmth; it quickly forms a flexible film over the wound that gradually wears off as new skin cells grow beneath it. Advantages are: a local anesthetic is not required unless it is need to cleanse and debride the wound; it takes half as much time as suturing; there is less scarring; and the client does not have to return to have stitches removed.

The petitioners report that if registered nurses were allowed to provide the service, the client could receive treatment on site, thus avoiding the usual long wait in the emergency department for care of a low priority injury.

Rationale:

Iowa Code section 152.1, subsection 2, paragraph d authorizes the registered nurse to:

Perform additional acts or nursing specialties which require education and training under emergency and other conditions which are recognized by the medical and nursing professions and are approved by the board as being proper to be performed by the registered nurse.

655 IAC 6.2(5) states in part:

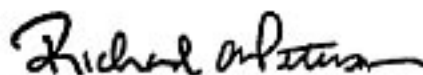
The registered nurse shall recognize and understand the legal implications of accountability. Accountability includes but need not be limited to the following:

- a. Performing or supervising those activities and functions which require the knowledge and skill level currently ascribed to the registered nurse and seeking assistance when activities and functions are beyond the licensee's scope of preparation.

The Iowa Board of Nursing finds it to be within the scope of practice of the registered nurse employed in an occupational

health clinic to use a topical skin adhesive to close simple skin lacerations under the written protocol of the medical director/plant physician when:

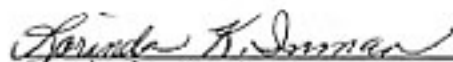
1. The registered nurse has completed a training program on the technique and documentation thereof is retained in the registered nurse's personnel file.
2. Registered nurses are provided an annual review of the procedure and documentation thereof is retained in the registered nurse's personnel file.
3. The institution has a written policy identifying that the procedure is acceptable practice for the registered nurse in the facility.
4. The procedure has been prescribed by the physician as a written order.



Richard A. Petersen, R.N., M.S.N.
Chairperson
Iowa Board of Nursing

December 9, 1999

Date



Lorinda K. Inman, R.N., M.S.N.
Executive Director
Iowa Board of Nursing

December 9, 1999

Date